



NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH • CAROLINA

USDA FOREST SERVICE, 160A ZILICOA STREET, ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

NEWS • RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Uwharrie National Forest Proposed Land Management Plan Available for Public Review and Comment

The Uwharrie National Forest Proposed Land Management Plan is now available for public review and comment. The Proposed Plan is the result of a collaborative effort among the USDA Forest Service, numerous members of the public, and other local, state, and federal agencies.

“I’m proud of this plan as much for what it represents as a community effort as for what it represents as a change in direction for forest management,” states Marisue Hilliard, Forest Supervisor for the National Forests in North Carolina. “The public has worked with us to build this Plan every step along the way.”

This Proposed Plan focuses around three main themes:

1. **Restoring the forest to a more natural ecological condition:** For example, reducing the amount of loblolly pine plantations in favor of reestablishing longleaf pine forests or oak-hickory forests.
2. **Better managing heritage resources:** The historic and prehistoric sites and artifacts found on the Uwharrie would be protected, but we would also use them to provide opportunities for research, teaching, and interpretation.

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3. **Providing outstanding and environmentally friendly outdoor recreation opportunities, with excellent trails and facilities:** Our focus for this program would be on improving the conditions of the horse and off-highway vehicle trails in the Badin Lake area and working to complete the Uwharrie National Recreation Trail.

Another big change called for in the Proposed Plan is the designation of 32 Special Areas on the Uwharrie National Forest, comprising a total of 5,391 acres, including areas with unique or rare botanical, zoological, geological, historical and archeological, scenic and/or recreational values. They also include the best examples of more commonly encountered ecological systems, such as intact oak/hickory forests.

People may submit comments on the Proposed Plan for a 90 day period starting February 15th. The Proposed Plan, along with several related documents, is available electronically at:

http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc/uwharrie_plan/.

Hard copies of the Proposed Plan or any other of the other documents may be requested by e-mail at:

comments-southern-north-carolina@fs.fed.us;

Or, make a written request to:

Proposed Land Management Plan
NFsNC/Uwharrie National Forest
160A Zillicoa Street
Asheville, NC 28801

A final decision on the Proposed Plan is expected in the Fall of 2007.

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